

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A remote control device for controlling a reduced operational mode of a vehicle comprising:

a portable communication device operable to communicate with the vehicle; and

a detachable component selectively coupled to said communication device, said communication device operable to initiate a reduced operational mode for the vehicle upon detachment of the detachable component from said communication device.

2. The remote control device of claim 1 wherein said detachable component provides an input to said portable communication device in an attached position.

3. The remote control device of claim 2 wherein said portable communication device detects said input in said attached position and initiates a normal operational mode upon said detection.

4. The remote control device of claim 3 wherein said input includes an electrical resistance.

5. The remote control device of claim 4 wherein said detachment of said detachable component causes an input voltage to change on said portable device.

6. The remote control device of claim 1 wherein said reduced operational mode includes inhibiting access to predetermined storage compartments in the vehicle.

7. The remote control device of claim 6 wherein said predetermined storage compartments includes at least one of a trunk and a glove box.

8. The remote control device of claim 1 wherein said reduced operational mode includes limiting vehicle RPM and vehicle speed.

9. The remote control device of claim 1 wherein said detachable component includes a key, said key operable to provide access to and operation of the vehicle.

10. The remote control device of claim 4 wherein said input is in the form of a chip resistor embedded in a key.

11. A remote control device for controlling a reduced operational mode of a vehicle comprising:

a vehicle control unit;

a receiver operable to communicate a signal to said control unit;

a portable communication device operable to communicate with said receiver; and

a detachable component selectively coupled to said communication device, said communication device operable to communicate a request signal to said receiver upon removal of said detachable component from said communication device, said request signal initiating said control unit to operate the vehicle in a reduced operational mode.

12. The remote control device of claim 11 wherein said detachable component provides an input to said portable communication device in an attached position.

13. The remote control device of claim 12 wherein said portable communication device detects said input in said attached position and initiates a normal operational mode upon said detection.

14. The remote control device of claim 13 wherein said input includes an electrical resistance.

15. The remote control device of claim 11 wherein said detachable component includes a key, said key operable to provide access to and operation of the vehicle.

16. A method for controlling a reduced operational mode of a vehicle comprising:

communicating a first signal from a portable communication device based on the presence of a detachable component coupled to said portable communication device;

communicating a second signal from said portable communication device based on the absence of said detachable component from said portable communication device;

receiving at least one of said first and second signal by a receiver associated with the vehicle; and

performing at least one of:

operating the vehicle in a normal operational mode based on said receiver receiving said first signal; and

operating the vehicle in a reduced operational mode based on said receiver receiving said second signal.

17. The method of claim 16 wherein operating the vehicle in a reduced operational mode includes at least one of:

inhibiting access to predetermined storage compartments in the vehicle;

limiting RPM of a vehicle engine;

limiting speed of the vehicle;

initiating a recording device for recording vehicle conditions while in said reduced operational mode, said vehicle conditions including at least one of vehicle mileage accumulation and engine run time;

inhibiting customizable settings; and

precluding operation of a vehicle audio system.